

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A purification method for separating minicells from parent bacterial cells that comprises (a) providing a sample enriched for minicells, wherein said minicells are approximately 0.4  $\mu$ m in diameter, (a) (b) subjecting a said sample enriched for minicells to a condition selected from the group consisting of a stress-inducing osmotic condition, an anaerobic condition and a nutrient-limiting condition, which condition induces parent bacterial cells to adopt a filamentous form, and then (b) (c) filtering said sample, wherein said filtering passes such that minicells but not filamentous parent bacterial cells pass, such that whereby said method yields a purified composition of minicells free of parent bacterial cells.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Original) A method according to claim 9, wherein said sample is incubated in a hypertonic medium.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 9, wherein the filtering step is a dead-end filtration with a filter employing a pore size of about 0.45  $\mu$ m.

13-26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein the filtering step comprises cross-flow filtration.

28. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein the filtering step comprises a serial filtration process that combines cross-flow filtration and dead-end filtration.

29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 28, wherein the filtering step employs at least one filter employing a pore size less than or equal to about 0.2  $\mu$ m.

30. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 28, wherein the filtering step employs at least one filter employing a pore size greater than or equal to about 0.45  $\mu\text{m}$ .

31. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 28, wherein said serial filtration process is preceded by differential centrifugation.

32. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein the filtering step employs at least one filter employing a pore size less than or equal to about 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$ .

33. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein the filtering step employs at least one filter employing a pore size greater than or equal to about 0.45  $\mu\text{m}$ .

34. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, further comprising a step of subjecting the minicells to density gradient centrifugation in a biologically compatible medium.

35. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 34, further comprising a step of subjecting the minicells to differential centrifugation.

36. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein said medium is isotonic and non-toxic.

37. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein said medium consists essentially of iodixanol and water.

38. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, further comprising a step of treating said purified composition of minicells with an antibiotic.

39. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, further comprising a step of removing free endotoxin from said purified composition of minicells.

40. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 39, wherein said step of removing free endotoxin employs anti-Lipid A antibodies.

41. (New) A method according to claim 9, wherein the purified composition of minicells contains fewer than about 1 contaminating parent bacterial cell per  $10^8$ ,  $10^9$ ,  $10^{10}$  or  $10^{11}$  minicells.

42. (New) A method according to claim 9, wherein the purified composition of minicells contains fewer than about 1 contaminating parent bacterial cell per  $10^9$  minicells.

43. (New) A method according to claim 9, wherein the purified composition of minicells contains fewer than about 1 contaminating parent bacterial cell per  $10^{10}$  minicells.

44. (New) A method according to claim 9, wherein the purified composition of minicells contains fewer than about 1 contaminating parent bacterial cell per  $10^{11}$  minicells.